



CSU Extension Boulder County  
Advisory Board Meeting Minutes  
September 14, 2023

Meeting called to order at 6:00 PM in person at the Natural Resource Building, Longmont.

**Board Members:**

Present: Hallie Adams, Rob Alexander, Nick Cappello, Mary Mulry, Kate Newberg, Jay Ruggeri, and Kirsten Ruiz. Absent: Rich OKeefe. Quorum present? Yes

**Boulder County Extension Staff:**

Laura Larson and Dena H were in attendance.

**Call the meeting to order:**

Motion: Jay motioned that the September 14, 2023, meeting of the Extension Advisory Board be called to order, Rob seconded that motion; all were in favor.

Joshua Coffie stepped down from the board. Introductions and welcome of new board member Kirsten Ruiz.

**Approval of Minutes:**

June 20, 2023, and today's minutes will be presented for approval at the next board meeting.

**Director's Update:**

- *Current staffing*

In the final stages of the Agriculture Specialist search, a CSU position following the CSU salary range, benefits, and hiring policies. The position works with County Commissioners on crafting policy, advising on best practices and research methodologies, history of working with producers and public speaking. Adrian Card, the former Agriculture Agent now a CSU Statewide Specialist, has been available to answer questions during this transition.

In 2022, the Board drafted a letter of concern regarding the hiring and retention of CSU Extension staff and the effect of current salaries on service delivery in Boulder County. CSU recently came out with a new salary schedule that is slightly better depending on experience. However, CSU will not offer pay

differential based on geographic location and therefore is not keeping pace, making it difficult to compete. Laura has enough knowledge based and frustration that she can accurately depict the tenuous situation to illustration the problem to upper administration at CSU and/or County Commissioners. Discussion and brainstorming took place between the board and Laura of other avenues that might be available. CSU has prioritized in their strategic plan to increase salaries. With the planned retirement of the Front Desk Reception position, in the interim, Laura requested from the Parks and Open Space department head, a part-time hourly person to help cover shifts at the front desk, which was authorized.

The staff we have hired are very dedicated to being here, very invested in working for Boulder County Extension, they are collaborating with each other, good energy together. A great team!

- *Successful Boulder County Fair*

Staff is recovering and 4-H members are turning in record books to be judged or completed with a deadline of today.

- *CSU Forum is September 18 to September 22*

All of CSU staff will be attending CSU Forum in Fort Collins, great for networking and connecting to our peers within the state.

- *CSU Extension Strategic Planning Goals*

Extension staff is scheduled to meet on October 26 to work on strategic planning goals for 2024-2028. The County Commissioners just revealed their strategic priorities at a leadership luncheon, soon to be officially released. Topics included items such as environmental stewardship, creative ways of subsidizing housing, health and wellbeing in the county, climate related issues and building resiliency. Extension will most likely stay in the same vein as our prior years, but based on our community needs assessment we identified seniors, LGBTQ youth, Latinx folks and people with disabilities as the four target areas where we are underserved throughout our programming. All our program coordinators will develop plans for how they are going to meet the needs of those populations through various programs as part of the process. We will also be wrapping up the prior last 4-year goals noting successes and will share out with the Board.

### **Old Business:**

#### A. Extension Staff Social

Thank you for all the support with providing a dish for the Board/Staff social. Turnout was a great success and good connections were made. Great to meet new members. It is great for staff to see the Board, know who you are, know that they have the Board's support, and that you are out in the community advocating for Extension.

### **Open Discussion:**

#### A. Vacancies and brainstorm ideas for recruiting diverse board members.

The Board shall consist of at least seven but not more than twelve appointed members. The Director of Extension may appoint up to six members to one-year terms. These members should represent a specific program area or demographic of the county. All other members of the Board shall be appointed

by the County Commissioners (a total of six) to serve for three-year terms. Members shall be recruited and appointed by the same procedure which the County Commissioners follow for other appointments to the county boards and commissions. The next open recruitment period is January 2024. Director appointments can happen throughout the year.

USDA/NIFA requires a focus on diversifying the board to represent the demographics of Boulder County. USDA's guidelines are clear: demographic composition of advisory board/committees must achieve Race, Ethnicity, and Gender (REG) parity for their respective service areas. "Parity" is defined as  $\geq 80\%$  of the services area's REG demographics. Boulder County 2022 census: Hispanic or Latino is 14.10%, parity goal would be 11.28%. USDA is looking at our efforts in increasing diversity amongst the board.

Recruit from a party that is already interested in Extension in some way, i.e. someone whose child participates in 4-H or someone who is in the Ag world or industry. Possibly reaching out to parents at schools or parents of 4-H kids. It was acknowledged that while efforts to engage parents in bilingual and family-centered programming were underway, these same individuals might find it challenging to take on leadership roles, such as serving on the Board. Educating folks about the commitment involved, initial connection most likely will be with someone you know and that you have a relationship with.

#### B. Concerns regarding enrollments with 4-H

Concerns were expressed about participation in the 4-H program. A request for more detailed information on which areas are experiencing growth and which are declining. The Board would like to have a better understanding of participation trends, historical data, and specific figures for various program areas and regions to inform future strategies. Despite COVID-related disruptions, in general, participation numbers were on the rise and efforts are underway to rebuild the volunteer base.

The importance of 4-H extension in serving humanity was emphasized. The Board highlighted the importance of focusing on the younger generation and engaging the Latinx community to ensure the program's future success. Efforts to recruit parent leaders and expand programs for Latinx families was discussed. Our staff have been making good strides in that direction, however, there is still more work to be done.

#### C. Next Board Meeting.

Kate will be absent the full month of December. Commissioners meeting would be best if scheduled in January.

Planning meeting is scheduled for Wednesday November 15, 2023.

#### **The meeting adjourned**

Minutes prepared by Dena.

#### **Boulder County Commissioners' Strategic Priorities**

2019-2023 Boulder County Commissioners' Strategic Priorities: Affordable Living, Climate Action, Equity & Justice, Land & Water Stewardship and Organizational & Financial Stewardship.  
<https://inbc.boco.co.boulder.co.us/sites/bocc/Pages/Strategic-Priorities.aspx>